Examiners' Report
Lead Examiner Feedback

January 2022

Pearson BTEC Nationals
In Performing Arts (31555H)
Unit 1: Investigating Practitioners' Work

Edexcel and BTEC Qualifications

Edexcel and BTEC qualifications come from Pearson, the world's leading learning company. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers. For further information visit our qualifications website at http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/home.html for our BTEC qualifications.

Alternatively, you can get in touch with us using the details on our contact us page at http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/contact-us.html

If you have any subject specific questions about this specification that require the help of a subject specialist, you can speak directly to the subject team at Pearson. Their contact details can be found on this link:
http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-for-you/teachers.html

You can also use our online Ask the Expert service at https://www.edexcelonline.com
You will need an Edexcel Online username and password to access this service.

Pearson: helping people progress, everywhere

Our aim is to help everyone progress in their lives through education. We believe in every kind of learning, for all kinds of people, wherever they are in the world. We've been involved in education for over 150 years, and by working across 70 countries, in 100 languages, we have built an international reputation for our commitment to high standards and raising achievement through innovation in education. Find out more about how we can help you and your learners at: www.pearson.com/uk

January 2022
Publications Code 31555H_2201_ER
All the material in this publication is copyright
© Pearson Education Ltd 2022

Grade Boundaries

What is a grade boundary?

A grade boundary is where we set the level of achievement required to obtain a certain grade for the externally assessed unit. We set grade boundaries for each grade, at Distinction, Merit and Pass.

Setting grade boundaries

When we set grade boundaries, we look at the performance of every learner who took the external assessment. When we can see the full picture of performance, our experts are then able to decide where best to place the grade boundaries – this means that they decide what the lowest possible mark is for a particular grade.

When our experts set the grade boundaries, they make sure that learners receive grades which reflect their ability. Awarding grade boundaries is conducted to ensure learners achieve the grade they deserve to achieve, irrespective of variation in the external assessment.

Variations in external assessments

Each external assessment we set asks different questions and may assess different parts of the unit content outlined in the specification. It would be unfair to learners if we set the same grade boundaries for each assessment, because then it would not take accessibility into account.

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, are on the website via this link:
http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html

Awarding BTEC qualifications in 2022

Ofqual has set out their plans for awarding qualifications in 2022 and intend to return to a normal, pre-pandemic, approach to grading standards over by 2023. They have confirmed that 2022 will be a transition year, to reflect that we are in a pandemic recovery period and students' education has been disrupted.

Our guiding principle and approach to awarding BTEC qualification results in 2022 will be to ensure parity in relation to the approach being taken for GCSE and A level learners. BTEC courses have a different structure and design to academic qualifications - BTECs are modular qualifications (with assessments taking place throughout the course) compared to GCSEs and A levels which are linear (assessed and awarded at the same time at the end of the year), and therefore our approach needs to be different.

In 2022 we will return to the usual method of calculating BTEC qualification results, however adaptations including, U-TAGs and reduced internal assessment, are in place to provide a comprehensive package of support for students.

The basis of our awarding approach to BTECs this year is to ensure it is as fair as possible for all learners. We will use a range of evidence to set grade boundaries for the external units. Part of this evidence will be to closely monitor learner performance in all assessments that contribute to learners' final qualification grade, to ensure parity with A level and GCSEs.

Further information can be found on our website and via our Social Media channels.

Unit Code: Unit title

Grade	Unclassified	Level 3			
		N	P	M	D
Boundary Mark	0	7	15	26	37

Introduction

Unit 1: *Investigating Practitioners' Work* is a mandatory externally assessed unit on the following qualification sizes of the BTEC Nationals in Performing Arts: Certificate, Extended Certificate, Foundation Diploma, Diploma and Extended Diploma.

This Level 3 unit has 90 guided learning hours, ensuring learners have plenty of opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding of the performance and production repertoire of two practitioners; one chosen from a set list in the unit specification and a second practitioner that can either be chosen from the same list or be one of the learner's own choice.

During the teaching and learning phase for this unit learners should develop their knowledge and understanding of the contextual factors that have influenced their practitioners' practical work and develop their ability to critically analyse this performance and production work.

The focus of the task paper is to assess learners' investigation into the performance and production repertoire of two practitioners, along with the contextual influences that have influenced the practitioners and the performance and production repertoire of those practitioners.

The paper is set twice every year with a Part A pre-release paper containing the theme released in December for January assessment, and in March for assessment in May. As a result of the Coronavirus pandemic, the task paper was released early, in mid-November this year, in order to support learners' preparation for the external assessment this series.

Learners normally have four weeks, and this series had eight weeks, to refine their research into their chosen practitioners' performance and production repertoire in response to the set theme, which for this series was Action. At the end of this independent research period, learners spend a total of three hours in one or more supervised sessions writing up their independent notes and preparing their bibliography. These notes, and the bibliography, are the only notes learners can use in the formal assessment period for Part B.

The Part B task paper requires learners to respond to three activities. The task paper and the specific focus of the three activities changes

every series and it is essential that learners respond to the specific activities on the task paper in the year and series of their assessment.

Discussion and analysis of practitioners' performance and production repertoire can be in response to live or recorded live performance work seen during the delivery of the unit. The response can be to professional, semi-professional or amateur work, as long as the performance and production style **accurately** reflects that of the chosen practitioner's own work and not the learners' own practical work, for example, practical explorations learners have carried out in class.

Introduction to the Overall Performance of the Unit

The knowledge and understanding learners must demonstrate in their response to each of the activities in the Part B task paper remains very similar to that required by task papers in previous series. Much of the information in the Lead Examiner report from previous series is relevant and thus repeated for this series.

Centres are reminded to access and use the required documentation for this externally assessed unit all of which can be found on the Pearson website.

This Administrative Support Guide provides all the documentation that needs to be sent, alongside the learner work, to Pearson. Teachers and Exam Officers should be fully aware of the required documentation that accompanies the learner work for this unit.

Learners need to refer to their practitioners' performance and production repertoire in order to demonstrate an effective application of an investigation process. In successful responses it was clear that learners had watched and studied live performances, or recordings, of **live performances.**

Examiners reported seeing a very wide range of work covering the full range of marks available. Most learners responded well to the activities and produced work that fulfilled the requirements of this set task with many effective responses. The clear focus of the three activities in part B of the task paper supports many learners to respond to the specific requirements of each activity and therefore achieve high marks. However, there were also less effective and/or brief responses to each activity from some learners.

Some very good responses were seen in all performing arts disciplines, especially in relation to DV8, Matthew Bourne, Frantic Assembly, Steven Berkoff, Akram Khan, Lin-Manual Miranda and Christopher Bruce. In all of this work there was a clear sense that the practitioners' performance and production work had been watched, studied and analysed thoroughly in relation to the theme of *Action.* In these responses it was evident that learners had watched and analysed a number of pieces of performance work in order to robustly prepare for the task paper. These learners kept the performance and production work of their practitioners at the heart of their response.

It is important to note that the careful selection of practitioners is paramount to success in this unit. There were, unfortunately, a minority of learners who had chosen practitioners that were not ideal and/or were inappropriate for the completion of the activities in the Part B set task paper. Examples of such practitioners are:

- individuals or companies that do not have international recognition and an established reputation and presence
- practitioners where learners were not able to, or did not see live or recorded work which had been created by their practitioner or which accurately replicated the practitioners' work
- practitioners where there was very little contextual information on their work available.

This had an impact on learners' achievement as it meant they had not addressed an important demand of the unit specification and were often unable to respond successfully to the specific requirements of the assessment activities.

It is important to select appropriate practitioners who have live or recordings of live performances available which are relevant to the selected theme, which this series was *Action.* Learners **must** be able to see repertoire which accurately replicates the intentions of their chosen practitioner. There were, for example, instances in this series of learners who chose Brecht or Stanislavski as their practitioner but had not seen any live performances which replicated their work. Responses in these instances focused on the theories of the practitioners and not how their stylistic features were conveyed in live performance. Such an approach disadvantaged learners.

As centres are probably aware, the availability of the National Theatre Collection, which is free of charge to state schools, means that learners are now able to access a wide range of recorded live performances that can support their research for this unit, especially in relation to drama practitioners such as Brecht and Stanislavski.

Most learners though, had seen and researched suitable performance work but a few learners did not appear to have a useful range of performance and production work to draw upon when responding to the task paper. Some learners used productions such as Complicite's 'Can I Live' and Lin-Manuel Miranda's '21 Chump Street' which did not support learners to fully respond to several of the elements in Activity 2. Miranda's animation work does not meet with the requirements for this unit either.

Fortunately, there were very few responses this series that chose playwrights such as Ibsen, Chekhov and Shakespeare as their practitioner. As stated in previous Lead Examiner Reports, playwrights are not ideally suited for study in this unit. The work of playwrights is interpreted by theatre practitioners and it is this element of **live performance**, not the text itself, that is the focus for this unit. Learners who analysed playwrights' texts and who did not discuss live/recorded performance and production repertoire were disadvantaged as they struggled to reference 'at least one specific scene or moment from each practitioner's performance and production repertoire', required by each activity on the task paper. They also struggled when discussing the performance and production elements in Activity 2.

Although examiners did not see examples of learners using theatre companies this series, it is worth a reminder that companies such as the Royal Shakespeare Company, Ballet Rambert and the National Theatre do not have a house style – they employ individual directors/choreographers who have their own individual directorial approach to the work. It is this individual directorial/choreographic approach of the practitioner of putting the work on stage that is relevant to this unit.

If learners are looking at, for example, Stanislavski as their practitioner; viewing a naturalistic production using elements of his style is crucial research for learners. Ideally, if it is a play which has connections with Stanislavski, such as a performance of a play by Chekhov or Ibsen which fully reflects Stanislavski's approach, this is most beneficial to learners as it has a clear connection to Stanislavski's ideas. Similarly with

Brecht, the performance analysed by learners must accurately replicate Brecht's stylistic features and not be another company or director's own interpretation/selection/adaptation of Brecht's style.

As noted in previous Lead Examiner reports, one practitioner who can be problematic when approaching this unit is Bob Fosse, as the direction and choreography of his films such as *Sweet Charity, Chicago* and *Cabaret* are integral to the overall effect he wished to create. What learners must avoid is discussing the filmic devices such as the use of camera angles etc, as this is not relevant to the focus and discussion of the choreographic performance elements of Fosse's work. Also, it may disadvantage learners to discuss the filmic production elements such as lighting, set and staging as these are not filmed as live theatre productions which is the main focus of this unit. This limits the choices learners can successfully respond to in Activity 2.

An example of how discussion of cinematic elements disadvantages the learner can be seen here:

'In Rich Man's Frug, Fosse uses cinematography in order to put the audience in the centre of the action. He made it an immersive and almost interactive experience. The camera zoomed in and out, crashing and moving away from the faces of the dancers, so in effect the audience was the camera in the centre of the action. In percussive moments the fighters would punch towards the camera, again involving the audience in the action. In Cabaret the camera follows Sally Bowles in the song Mein Herr and follow the actions of her face, feet and occasionally hands using a close camera shot. Also in Cabaret the camera would sometimes be in a row in the audience while waiters walked around, again placing the audience as part of the action or the event.'

Examiners, again, commented that learners tended to provide effective responses when they felt a connection to the work of the practitioners that they had actually seen live or recorded live. In these instances they could vividly describe moments of repertoire relevant to the three activities which is the focus on this unit..Effective examples of this were seen in repertoire such as *Hamilton, Things I Know to be True, Swan Lake, Lovesong, The Trial, Ghost Dances* and *Into the Woods.*

In the most effective responses, examiners were impressed with the depth of learners' knowledge and understanding of the repertoire of their chosen practitioners and with their ability to write persuasively in response to the specific focus of each activity. There were many instances of clear thought, detailed knowledge and insightful critical analysis of the practitioners' performance and production repertoire.

High quality work was seen where learners responded to the specific demands of each activity, particularly the reference to and/or analysis of practical performance and production repertoire. This work was well written and the application of research and a thorough investigation process was clearly evident.

In the most effective responses, learners focused on the specific demands of each activity and did not offer detailed definitions of the theme or biographical or contextual factors in Activities 2 and 3.

The use of citations within the learner's response to each task is good practice, however it is not essential if learners are not including direct quotations. If learners are using direct quotations in their response to any of the three activities, then they should obviously reference and cite the source of the quotation. Whilst there is no set style of referencing prescribed, Harvard appears to be the most popular format used in this and in previous series.

It is important to note that learners are still able to demonstrate a very sophisticated application of an investigation process, with perceptive use of a range of meaningful sources to fully support their conclusions, without including references and citations in the body of their response to an activity. It is the quality of the learner's response and their specific reference to relevant performance and production repertoire that evidences the quality of their investigation process.

Unfortunately, in some instances, it appeared that learners had not seen any of their chosen practitioners' performance and production repertoire. In these cases, the learner's response was often limited to a narrative discussion of the plot, which tended to mean that they were not applying critical analysis skills or demonstrating their knowledge and understanding of performance and production repertoire, thereby making it difficult for them to achieve highly for any activity. This is often particularly noticeable in relation to Brecht where the majority of learners only referenced the texts of the plays and not the performance of the play. Such responses were often quite literary and plot driven. As with all practitioners, it is essential that learners watch live or recorded productions which allow them to discuss performance and production repertoire.

Learners do not need to discuss or analyse the whole piece of repertoire, but it is strongly advised that they have watched the entire piece of work

so that they can choose their own moments to discuss. They should include carefully chosen moments of repertoire in response to the specific focus of the activity. If the analysis of the repertoire is pertinent and contains some detail, then it should take the examiner on 'a journey', and when reading the response, they should be able to visualise what was happening on the stage. In these cases, it was always clear that the learner had undertaken a sophisticated investigation process and could be justly rewarded for doing so.

There appeared to be more instances in this series of learners having only watched trailers or brief moments of live performance, in particular for practitioners such as Katie Mitchell or Brecht. This disadvantaged learners as it was evident that the very brief moments discussed were not able to be analysed or discussed within the context of the whole performance.

Most learners had provided a bibliography. These ranged from a comprehensive list of sources, with clear reference to live and/or recorded performance and production repertoire, reviews, books and education packs; to others who only used references to Wikipedia and/or very short YouTube clips of work.

As in previous series there was some evidence of learner responses which were unbalanced. For example, some learners spent too long on Activity 1, which is worth 12 marks, and then didn't leave themselves enough time to respond in full to Activity 3 which is worth 24 marks. There was also evidence of learner responses to Activity 1 that were unbalanced in terms of the focus on each practitioner. Learners should be advised when preparing for this external assessment that they need to consider both practitioners equally in Activity 1 and fairly equally in Activity 3. Plus, t they should follow the timing recommendations in the Part B task paper for each activity.

There was an increase of handwritten papers this series. Responses can be handwritten or word processed, but if handwritten it is vitally important that learners are supported by giving them lined paper. There were many instances where learners had been given plain paper and work often, understandably in the circumstances of a long examination time, became disordered on the page without lines to follow.

Overall, the responses to each activity were generally well-written and structured, with a clear use of language.

Individual Questions

Activity 1

This activity requires learners to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of how *social* contextual factors have influenced the performance and production repertoire of their two chosen performing arts practitioners. Whilst doing this, learners also need to discuss at least one specific scene or moment from each practitioner's performance and production repertoire, connected to the theme, *Action*. As always, learners who responded to the specific focus of the task achieved most highly.

Nearly all learners were able to make reference to some general *social* contextual factors that have influenced their chosen practitioners' work, with the word *social* being interpreted in the broadest sense.

In the most successful responses, learners explained how relevant *social* factors were evident in the practical performance repertoire being discussed. In the most cohesive and insightful responses the *social* influences on the practitioner and the theme of *Action* were evident in the performance and production repertoire being discussed.

In less successful responses, learners outlined broadly relevant *social* factors that had influenced their chosen practitioners' work, and then discussed an example from the practitioners' performance and production repertoire that reflected the theme of *Action* without connecting the two different requirements of this activity.

There was an increase this series of responses that did not reference the performance or production work of their chosen practitioner for Activity 1. Some learners tended to write down 'everything they knew' about their practitioner with little specific focus on the theme or the influence of *social* factors. In these instances, the '*social*' factors tended to be biographical statements with a tenuous link to the theme:

'Duncan attended school from the age of 6 to 10 and she dropped out as she said that school was quite constricting. This relates to the theme of action as she is taking it upon herself to live the life she has always wanted.'

In a few other less successful responses, there were, unfortunately, instances still of learners tending to give general biographical details on

their practitioners or, as often seen for Brecht, Stanislavski and Berkoff, a discussion of the practitioners' theories on theatre with little reference to the specific requirements of the activity. Similarly for Frantic Assembly, many learners discussed the Ignition Project or how Steven Hoggett and Scott Graham met, which had little relevance to the requirements of this task.

Some learners unfortunately made limited reference to the practitioners' performance and production work. Learners who had not seen or, were not able to make any reference to their practitioners' performance or production repertoire, were at a severe disadvantage when responding to this activity. Learners who included specific detail of moments from the repertoire were more successful than those who provided a plot or general outline of the work with relation to *social* contextual factors and the theme of *Action.*

The choice of practitioners and the availability of research and live performances connected to the full range of contextual factors is of utmost importance for this task. A few learners found it harder to discuss the *social* factors influencing their practitioners as they had chosen less well-known practitioners for which they were only able to include the most general biographical details.

Learners who focused on playwrights such as Godber could often make insightful connections between the work and the theme of *Action*, however, these responses often focused on the written plot and stage directions. It would have been beneficial for the learners to discuss how the performers/designers created the work physically on stage in relation to the theme.

In contrast, many very successful learners had focused on one main *social* contextual factor for each of their chosen practitioners and provided a good level of detail on how this *social* factor had influenced their practitioners' performance and production repertoire, providing detail about the repertoire in relation to the *social* context being discussed and the theme of *Action:*

'Shobana Jeyasingh wanted to use physical actions as a way of presenting the issues she sees and wants to change in order to encourage action from her audience to promote a change in society. As a choreographer her overall aim is to combat the xenophobia she sees in our society. She was influenced by the social factor of the 2007 terror law which was introduced to allow the legal search of anyone who may look suspicious which was targeted at Asian males... In this same year Shobana created the work called Faultline.

This was created to combat the negative stereotypes associated with people of Asian descent after various terrorist attacks, as this newly introduced law took the xenophobic attitudes that England as a nation hold, a step too far… In the beginning of Faultline a group of Asian males enter and perform centre stage, their actions are violent, supported by the use of fast tempo and levels to suggest their sporadic tempers, and show the aggression that people associate with Asian males. One movement they do is where one male crouching down has another of the male dancers jump on his back, with great weight, and wraps both his arms tightly around his body. Then, there is suddenly a moment of contraction and release where they tense inwards, then suddenly the performer on the back of the other jumps off with a sharp swing of his left arm with his hand in a fist as they move onto the next sequence. This moment shows the aggression associated with Asian males by them jumping on each other and the sudden release and jumping off the dancers back has visual connotations to the audience of a bomb, suggesting all males are terrorists which is Shabana's method of presenting to the audience their unconscious xenophobic views …'

And:

'A key scene that utilises social factors which communicates the theme of action is in Section 3 Dolencias. Here Bruce is taking action by drawing attention to the unspoken realities from a first-hand account in a letter he received from human rights activists Joan Jara. Jara's husband was tortured and killed after speaking out against the communist regime and the oppressive measures being taken against society. This section is a danced conversation between the older and more confident woman in red and her partner, the man in a suit. At 12:32 the lady in red makes a falling gesture onto her partner and they share and embracing moment. This gestured fall exemplifies the harsh realities of the broken families in Chile. The gestures are fleeting yet meaningful and Bruce is taking action to explicitly reference Joan Jara's letter and the story of her and her husband which resonate with many Chilean families who were thrust apart owing to the atrocities. The lady in red and her partner captivate the audience through the use of travelling and searching gestures depicting sorrow, the lady in red brings a curved arm over her head to show the search for her partner …. Later the man in the suit finds himself walking towards a ghost, leaving the woman to dance by herself isolated from her partner, she repeats the strong plié motif several times while the man walks away. The frantic gestures attest to his sorrow and fear. Eventually the ghosts elevate the man in the air as he endures an agonising death, his body judders and his legs perform a cycling gesture. This exemplifies Bruce taking action to depict the torturous killings that hundreds of thousands were subjected to before being murdered, mirroring what happened to Jara's husband. This section massively utilises movement in order to communicate the theme of action. Bruce is also taking action to emphasise the harsh realities as attested to by Joan Jara.'

Learners who included specific detail of moments from the repertoire were more successful than those who provided a plot or general outline of the work with relation to *social* contextual factors and the theme of *Action.*

Examiners reported that the level of detail when discussing repertoire was often impressive and gave a clear sense of understanding of the work, which is evident in the examples already discussed and in those below:

'Berkoff is a practitioner who has used social influences to inspire his work. He came from a working class family and had many struggles growing up . . . He was also influenced by Margaret Thatcher… holding a anti-Thatcher stance . . . he hated the way the upper class and working class weren't treated equally and developed a Marxist view of society … These social influences helped to inspire him in the Chief Clerk scene within the play Metamorphosis. This moment focuses on how Gregor and the Samsa family are manipulated by authority and how the Chief Clark is trying to take action to get Gregor back to work. The Chief Clark strides in with military-like footsteps on the beat of the music. He walks across from upstage to downstage. The family are sat on stools but remain silent and follow him with their eyes. He has heavy footsteps with strong movements which connotes to the movements of a soldier and the family give him their full attention. He leans towards them and at the same time they lean away showing they are intimidated by him as he has authority. Greta shields herself from him protecting herself by crossing her arms in front of her face. He starts to clap his hands behind his back which brings a sense of urgency to the scene as he demands attention by making the noise. This is an uncomfortable sound to listen to on repeat. As he passes Mrs Samsa she bows towards him and keeps her head bowed and her physicality closed to show the inferiority she has. There is a lean again which highlights the fear and inferiority of the family by the Chief Clark through this repetition. His claps are now in front of his body as Mrs Samsa explains that Gregor is not usually absent from work. This intimidates her further as his goal is of taking action to get Gregor back to work and this is becoming increasingly more obvious…'

And:

'During 2001 there was a surge of race riots within the Yorkshire area. Throughout this period of time the country was experienced poverty, neglect and austerity. People were facing low wages and high prices and the UK as a society was left completely alone with cuts to public health funding. However in Yorkshire, which was one of the most impoverished areas in Britain, many of the working class white men believed the black and Asian communities were 'taking their jobs.' During this time the riots were said to have started due to the arrest of a Bangladeshi taxi driver who was sprayed with CS gas. This incident led to a night of arson and violence and caused an even bigger divide in the communities. . So, within their work, Frantic Assembly wanted to create something that could not only show this problem but also make it accessible for young people in order to to take action to lessen the hatred experienced between communities within society. Right from the start of Othello the theme of action is shown through Graham's use of set design. Othello is set in a pub and it gives a realistic representation of a working class society, but by creating the set to become 'alive' by having undulating walls and gliding pool tables it can almost interact with the

performers. The first thing the audience notices are the costumes that everyone is wearing as they're all in tracksuit bottoms and jacket with caps and buzz-cuts which mirrors the stereotypical lower class men of that time but also creates a sense of intimidation and hostility as these men are usually quite aggressive people in wider society. To further the idea of hostility and the theme of action, during the preshow scenes Graham added the Hybris soundtrack which loudly filled the stage. The thumping baseline created a brilliant backdrop as it highlighted the boys very anarchic nature. During the pre-show the boy swagger and posture around the stage to convey to the audience their tough guys pretence which gives a serious foreboding. In addition to this the theme of action is seen when the men swing their pool cues behind their shoulders to emphasise their domineering presence as well as their desperate desire for status and respect. Also by having the men perform around-by- through quickly in between one another it shows the tension in the working class environment as well as the antagonistic nature of these working class men.'

Some learners referenced multiple *social* contextual factors, often in less detail, and made limited reference to the practitioners' work. Unfortunately, in many cases, learners did not make reference to any practical and performance repertoire work at all. As already mentioned, learners who had not seen any of their practitioners' performance or production repertoire tended to be at a severe disadvantage when responding to this activity.

Unfortunately, as seen in previous series, it was evident that some learners wrote a lot in response to this activity and seemed to have spent longer than the suggested 40 minutes in completing their response. This was usually at the expense of the other activities, which attract higher marks: 24 marks each for Activity 2 and Activity 3 in comparison to the 12 marks for Activity 1. It is suggested that learners are clear about the timings for each activity and don't over run the suggested timings.

Activity 2

This activity requires learners to analyse three specific elements of one of their chosen practitioner's work, thereby demonstrating their knowledge and understanding of moments of the practitioner's performance and production repertoire which communicate the theme of *Action.*

Activity 2 was usually responded to effectively and this tended to be the activity in which learners who had seen performance and production work achieved their highest marks as they focused on specific moments of repertoire in relation to the theme and their selected performance

and production elements. It was often the case that the learners who discussed one or more sections of performance repertoire in detail covered their three chosen elements and the theme of *Action* achieved highly.

Some learners clearly listed the three chosen elements at the top of their response to this activity and then analysed the performance and production repertoire holistically with a focus on the three chosen elements. Other learners analysed the repertoire under subheadings from their three chosen elements. Either approach was equally effective, so long as there was a detailed consideration of each chosen element; the analysis of which demonstrated the learner's understanding of the performance and production repertoire and how it reflected the theme of *Action.* It is good practice for learners to clearly list the chosen three elements they are discussing in this activity, preferably as an introductory heading to the activity.

Many responses constantly referred to the theme of action rather than letting the example/moment from the performance/production being discussed speak for itself. Constantly referring to the theme and in some cases linking everything being discussed to the theme did not support the learners' responses. Just because a learner says something is action does not mean it effectively communicates the theme of action.

The most popular elements discussed were character, gesture, dynamics, performer to performer and choreography and/or direction.

Set and/or staging and/or special effects was also a popular choice of production elements however, learners often gave very little detail about how it was demonstrated in performance. There were several responses where learners discussed how there was no set, often self-limiting their discussion of their chosen element:

Khan: Dust
Set/Staging
'In Khan's Dust there is no set and the staging is the same as always therefore as an audience you focus more on the dancers than what is happening around them. Khan does this as he is not going for just entertainment value he wants to tell a story and bring an understanding of what the women went through in World War One to show women empowerment. Zero Degrees follows the same structure when it comes to a minimalistic set however it follows more meaning and lends itself to the piece to help Khan and Larbi focus on giving the right interpretation to the audience.'

In the most effective responses, learners were able to demonstrate accomplished analytical skills by providing a detailed analysis of the chosen elements in their practitioner's performance and production repertoire. In these instances, the moments being discussed were always very closely related to the theme of *Action*:

Miranda: Hamilton
Score/Choreography and/or Direction
'In the song 'My Shot' the theme of action has clearly been implemented. Within this song Hamilton is galvanising the entire ensemble to take action to stand up to the British and start a revolution. He is not going to let this moment pass him and acts passionately to get his ideas on their feet.
During the song the choreography undergoes an immense journey starting from what appears to be a laidback feel to an overwhelming end. It starts with just two men who in a seamless transition emerge from behind Hamilton from their pedestrianism into a large sweeping gesture from upstage to downstage as if they have his back and had taken his ideas forward. This throwing action is the catalyst that shows how these two men have started listening to Hamilton's ideas and are willing to take action alongside him. The energy is diverted to the four main principals who take up a marching step. The movement develops into a more army like stance as they march low to the ground and this is repeated. … At the end of the song the whole ensemble faces the front for the first time in a wide stance with their fists clenched and they appear ready for action. As the song texture grows with six harmonies at the end instead of a solo the same effect is in the dance as the full cast performed together at the end.
The score is clearly used by Miranda as a call to action. In bar seven there is a large crescendo used to grab the attention of the audience. It starts with just a bass and piano at the beginning and by the end, much like how more cast members joined the movement to take action, so do instruments in the accompaniment. The use of the full orchestra at the end of the song, in comparison to beginning where there are less instruments, shows how the music is taking action to grow just as Hamilton's dreams grow into reality. This also contrasts with the areas in the song where there is no accompaniment, for example on the line 'Let's get this guy in front of a crowd' which highlights this change of thought where Hamilton has now been put in a position of power to change America's future by taking action to eliminate the British. The driving bass also creates a power and momentum to build up the bass line before Miranda clearly adds a minor 9th chord in bar 107 on the line 'I know the action.' This use of an added note moves the idea and story along by creating a power that the idea is unresolved but in a position where it can be resolved by the unity of the ensemble. This added tension also grabs the attention of the ensemble so that they want to join Hamilton in taking action for what they believe in, moving the story along in the process.'

And:

Frantic Assembly: Lovesong
Character / performer to performer / direction
'The two characters contrast with each other as Maggie always wanted children and has always wanted more from life, Billy has never been affected by this until now as their inaction did not bring them happiness. Billy is clearly very upset about the fact he will not leave a legacy, he is stuck in the past as he cannot have children and it hurts deeply. Maggie is now taking action to change her life but Billy is static and stood still. Billy starts to meltdown and panic as he doesn't have a legacy, this is shown when he mimics and criticises his neighbour in a mocking tone 'You just need something to look after,' as he starts to cry… Later we see the old Billy lying helplessly in the garden by the bed as young Billy sits on the bed turned away from his partner. The performer of young and old Billy mirror each other as they sit up at the same time showing they are metaphorically stuck in the past… In the last moments of this scene gentle nostalgic sounding piano music begins to play. The music sets the scene as the character of old Billy sits back against the headboard and the scene freezes as old Maggie gets out of bed to open the wardrobe and takes out a pair of heeled shoes. Maggie brings the shoes gently to her chest and caresses them. It looks like she is holding a baby. She is taking action to find some happiness and this moment shows the femininity that she once had and so by putting the shoes on she is trying to reminisce about her past life. The music ebbs and flows with her emotions as she smiles, gently looking down at the shoes. As soon as she gets up she stumbles and the music builds which shows that she will not ever get back to who she used to be. The music continues to build as young Billy comes out and puts his arms around her trying to appreciate what they did when they were young. Strings are added to the nostalgic piano music, as the emotions build they cling to each other's arms, they look deeply into each other's eyes. They share a breath together and bow to each other, they accept each other in this moment flaws and all. This action of acceptance helps Maggie find happiness in herself and her relationship.'

Matthew Bourne, Christopher Bruce, Frantic Assembly, Lin-Manuel Miranda and DV8 were, again, very popular practitioners for Activity 2. Many learners had clearly engaged with their performances often evidencing perceptive understanding of performance and production elements seen in their pieces of repertoire:

DV8: Enter Achilles
Dynamics
'Dynamics are used in many examples of DV8's work to communicate a person's emotions or personality. In DV8 we see a difference in dynamics from quick rough actions to more soft and flowing ones, depending on what the character is trying to portray. For example in the first section of the piece, where we first see all the men in the pub, we hear some upbeat rock music and immediately the performers' dynamics and actions match the sound. Their movements are more quick and sharp and it appears in many points as if they are fighting. The movements aren't particularly in time with the music as they are quite erratic and don't usually have a specific beat or timing to follow, but they represent the men's careless natures and how there is little thought behind the actions they take, whether this be in the form of dance or

symbolising real life. This energy is juxtaposed when the more feminine man enters and immediately changes the music. There is a moment of stillness to show the audience that the equilibrium in the pub has become unbalanced. Then, as if nothing has happened, everyone begins to perform a synchronised piece which incorporates slow, flowing arm movements in unison; this is the first time in the piece we see every character doing the exact same action. However, this does not go on for too long as they quickly become distracted by something out of the window and rush over, leaving the man who just entered, by himself continuing with his soft gentle choreography. The complete difference between the two dynamics used in the piece sets apart the two types of characters the typical stereotypical male and the male who is truly himself without any barriers…'

And:

DV8: Can We Talk About This Gesture
'DV8's clever use of gesture is clear in the performance 'Can We Talk About This.' In the scene 'Xena Briggs', it is about a woman who had to go under witness protection to avoid being murdered by her family… In this scene Patel uses very little action aside from a range of hand gestures to communicate the action. These gestures cleverly reflect her speech, for example when talking about her initial escape when she is on the run, her hands make a fluttery bird like motion which rises upwards to represent her feeling of freedom and independence. However these movements quickly become more violent as she talks about the bounty hunter hired to kill her and she places her hands firmly around her neck. This action is held for few seconds before a quick release mirroring how she narrowly escapes capture and the pause really effectively demonstrates her fear. Another example of gesture used in this scene is when she becomes more covered throughout the scene as she starts exposed and as the scene progresses she first zips up her jacket. Later she lifts her hood to cover her head and even goes on to shield her face. These somewhat subtle gestures are incredibly important actions which communicate the constant fear and need to hide to the audience in a really moving way that allows us to connect with her.'

As with Activity 1, learners who had not seen any of their practitioners' performance or production repertoire were at a severe disadvantage when responding to this activity. Disappointingly, there were, again, several instances where learners had not appeared to have seen a performance influenced by their chosen practitioner, especially when Brecht or Stanislavski had been selected, and they were therefore not able to analyse the performance and production repertoire. These learners tended to write about the practitioner's work in a literary way, often with quite a narrative approach and did not respond to the focus of the task which is analysis of performance and production repertoire.

Other less effective responses tended to occur when learners did not

define which three elements they were analysing. In these instances, learners often wrote about a piece of repertoire incorporating many performance and production elements, often not listed on the task paper, and discussing each of them very generally. In these cases, even if learners analysed the performance and production work effectively, they rarely demonstrated thorough understanding of the prescribed elements and thus tended to provide a more generalised response to the specific focus of the activity.

It was evident that some learners were determined to write about pre-prepared elements with little regard to the elements on the task paper. Many learners discussed, in particular, costume or lighting in some detail even though they were not elements on the task paper, in these instances there was often little that was creditworthy.

Some other less effective responses provided some detail on their chosen element with tenuous links to the theme and often digressing onto biographical or contextual factors:

Bourne: Romeo and Juliet
Choreography
'The choreography in Romeo and Juliet heavily communicates the change from restriction to freedom of action the children are limited to mechanical movements when drugged against their will by the nuisance staff commanded to walk in an orderly formation with no facial expressions. They're even separated spatially with no mixing of genders a nod to the sex segregation that some still view appropriate in our own society approximately 25 schools in the UK practise sex segregation in mixed schools in breach of the Equality Act 2010…'

Other less effective responses, again provided very little specific detail on their chosen element with tenuous or no links to the theme and, tended to revert to narrative. Some did not fully discuss the chosen element, for example, learners chose score/music but often ended up discussing lyrics:

Miranda: Hamilton
Music and Score
'Another song in Hamilton that communicates the theme of action is 'Dear Theodosia' song which both Hamilton and Burr sing simultaneously about taking action to make their children's' future lives greater than their lives are. In the lyrics both characters state that 'I'll swear that I'll be around for you' this communicates the theme of action as it proposes the idea that both men will do 'whatever it takes and 'make a million mistakes' in order to take action to make the world a better place. This shows that the actions they partake in do not only have an effect on themselves but also their family and the rest of the country. The final song in the musical demonstrates the theme of

action as it implies that all actions have to have an effect on everyone else the whole idea of this song is to show the audience how Eliza takes action to pursue the objectives of the likes of Hamilton, Washington and those that fought in the Civil War.'

The best responses in relation to all the elements at the heart of them, had a clear sense of performance, not just a textual analysis:

Berkoff: East
Character
'Berkoff explores the father's repulsive and sarcastic character to create tension between the father and other characters. Moving slowly in time to the slow chords in the accompaniment, the characters huddle in a line with their arms over each other's shoulders whilst Les holds his hands up to his face, making a box shape and mimes taking a picture of the family. Sylv slowly, as if the scene is from an old movie which has been slowed down, commands 'Smile mum' to which the father sarcastically replies 'She is smiling.' The use of sarcasm implies the father is not a loving character creating tension in a scene previously full of joyous action. Moreover, when the characters mime visiting an ice cream truck the father opens his hands tall in front of him to show that he would like a much larger ice cream, potentially implying his greed. Les dips his right hand to the side mimes scooping ice cream, lifts his hand to where the previous scoop had landed, mimes placing the ice cream on top of the pile and repeats this several times. The father takes the ice cream using his left arm to balance himself implying it is quite precarious, he pulls his right hand down whilst keeping it cupped as if holding the ice cream and grins widely before sticking his tongue out and taking an exaggerated lick of the ice cream. Berkoff's decision to use grotesque actions for the father during this scene is reflective of his want to move away from traditional theatre forms … the father is presented as a repulsive greedy sarcastic character throughout the scene further adding to the tense action of the play East.'

And:

Bruce: Swan Song
Choreography/Music
'Swan Song by Christopher Bruce. The legato and melodic music with the echoes of bird sounds supports his bird like action of extended limbs, leaps and use of circular pathways and greatly complements the visuals of the performance, like his soul is flying away to a better place. The dancer uses the smoothness of the music allowing it to dictate the speed and tension of each movement to reflect his release from entrapment to freedom of death. Despite the prisoners inability to take action against the guards he is now free in death and the music emphasise is this. The piece ends with an uplifting chord as the prisoner ends with a bright white light shining in his face symbolising his entry into heaven.'

And:

Ailey: I've Been Buked
Choreography
'Ailey used choreography to communicate the theme of action in I've Been Buked as right at the beginning they're all stood tall and proud in unison showing no matter what little they have, they have pride in their heritage. The wedge shaped formation with the 'father figure' shows they are stronger together, which links to action as at a specific time the dancer in the middle of the wedge, the 'father figure,' rises up with his arms elongated overall the other dancers as they lower into a deep plié with their arms in a birdlike position, showing that the 'father figure' is taking action into protecting everyone else in the dance. Later when the dancers lower into a deep lunge plié in second position with their feet turned out and their arms horizontal with their palms facing up also looking up to God. This shows they were in pain and with the deepness of the lunged plié hope God will notice the suffering and help them.'

Effective responses provided more specific detail on the chosen elements with often insightful connections to the theme supported by perceptive examples from the chosen repertoire:

Bruce: Ghost Dances
Gesture/Music/Set
'In Ghost Dances the theme of action can be clearly noted throughout the piece through the use of gesture, music and set In section one we see birdlike gestures mirroring that of an Andean Condor by the three ghost characters. The Ghosts' actions and gestures are dynamically strong and powerful, they are Bruce's communication for the action he was taking to depict the harsh realities of Chilean people who must be alert and unified. This was depicted by the ghosts holding 9 seconds of stillness at different levels and looking into the wings. This head turning gesture and stillness depicts them listening and is synonymous with that of the Andean Condor stalking as well as Chilean people always being on edge...Moreover in section one we see the use of the aural setting as score and music demonstrate the action of Chilean people losing their lives to the dictatorship. The three ghosts turn their heads slowly to the audience as the music emerges, to which they begin their wingspan gesture. The ghosts break into a sideway slouched walk whilst tilting their heads in unison for five seconds. The head tilting gesture is rather predatorial and bestial-like, while also being playful and perhaps dog-like. This playful yet be bestial gesture could be Bruce depicting the ghosts finding their next consignment of the dead just as the Andean Condor would act predatorially upon finding its next meal... Later we see the production set, it is a rocky plain mountain peak and an opening to The Cave, perhaps suggesting that they have entered an underworld in their deaths. The rocky like structures of the set could be interpreted as the valley of the shadow of death, the rocks resembled that of a skull or coffin. The dead perform a contracting gesture at the stomach as though ghosts walk past them. The ghosts recline onto the rocks of the set and do not leave the stage until the piece is finished, this is to show that the Pinochet dictatorship was always watching its people and awaiting its chance to take their lives sometimes in a brutal fashion.'

And:

Frantic Assembly: Lovesong
Direction
'Action sequences are used frequently throughout Lovesong in order to convey the feelings and attitudes of the characters to the audience whilst subtly using this action to change any preconceptions they may have about theatre. One scene where I believe action is used most effectively is during the scene where the older version of Bill is preparing the kitchen table for the arrival of his wife whom he will present with a gift. The scene opens with a jaunty tune playing over the speakers to accompany Bill as he playfully skips onto the stage, clearly indicating he is very excited, if slightly nervous to see Maggie's reaction to the iPod. As he moves across the stage and towards the table, he carries a bow in one of his hands that is raised just up to the height of his head. This bow acts as a basis for all the movement in this scene up until he attaches it to the gift. As Bill reaches the kitchen table he performs a high spirited action that involves kicking a chair so that it tucks in under the table. This is certainly not the sort of action that you would expect from an old man which further hints at the idea that there is still a youthful playfulness left in him and that he is keen to take action and reignite the spark that was once between Maggie and himself. After this movement he retrieves a glass and places it down on the table, set slightly apart from the gift box which he placed there just a moment before. Following on from this, he glides over to the fridge before swinging open the door and reaching for one of the two bottles of brightly coloured juice which he grasps in one of his hands. He moves this bottle back to the table so that it is now hovering just above the glass. Instead of pouring the juice into the glass, a puzzled look crosses Bill's face and he instead moves back over to the fridge where he picks out the other bottle of juice which he clutches in his other hand. He heads back over to the table where he performs the same action involving hovering the juice above the glass before once again deciding against it. As he holds both bottles of juice, clearly conflicted, a visible moment of realisation flashes across his face as he pours juice from both bottles into the glass at the same time. Following on from this he places the juice bottles back into the fridge before hopping back over to the head of the table where he grabs the gift box once more. First he slides it along the table slightly, before changing his mind and returning it to the initial position closer to his body. The repeated use of action to indicate indecisiveness in this scene is designed to show how Bill is keen for everything to be perfect for Maggie. It is an instant that displays the idea that in Frantic Assembly plays, actions often speak louder than words. Having decided that everything is in order, a look of excitement crosses Bill's face before he quickly composes himself and takes a seat at the head of the table in a way that imitates the sort of action performed by a dog sitting up waiting for a bone - something that further highlights his anticipation. Finally he sits back into his chair placing the palm of his hand so it makes contact with the back of his head creating a feigned look of relaxation and action, supposed to suggest that Bill has been sitting there all along and that none of the action that just took place really occurred, at least not to the same level of childlike playfulness. The scene as a whole is incredibly effective at showing the true behaviour of Bill and indicating that he longs for the life he once led with Maggie. It is this act of spontaneity that suggests he has finally decided to take action and try to repair some of the damage to their relationship, even if Maggie lacks the playfulness that he still has.'

Activity 3

This activity requires learners to recommend one of their chosen practitioners' work to headline a performing arts festival in response to the motto, '*Every action needs to be prompted by a motive*.' In order to do this, they have to compare and analyse both practitioners' performance and production repertoire.

Most learners discussed both practitioners and offered a suggestion as to who should headline the festival, with some sense of investigation and comparison of the practitioners' work.

The response to the motto, '*Every action needs to be prompted by a motive*,' was effective with most learners engaging with the motto and some offering their own interpretation of the motto.

A minority of learners ignored the motto completely or continued to discuss their practitioners' work very generally in relation to the theme of *Action*.

The most effective responses often gave, at the start of the response, their own definition of the motto and justified their ideas relating to the work of the practitioners. From this starting point learners provided a balanced response on how the practitioners' repertoire related to the motto, going on to justify their ideas relating to the work of the practitioners:

'The motto means that everything must have a reasoning behind it and is caused by something in someone's thoughts. The motto has connotations of someone having thoughts behind every decision they make whether it be big or small. I believe the motto means that action only occurs when someone is driven to do something and feels they must take action.'

'I personally believe that, despite the wide range of interpretations this quote may incite, the phrase, 'Every action needs to be prompted by a motive,' demonstrates the importance of conscious and thoughtful actions which take place in order to rebel against societal pressure and expectations. The most suitable practitioner should have a range of performances which create a didactic approach and encourage their audiences to question social institutions. Both DV8 and Sondheim have a range of work which aims to do this alongside providing thoughtful messages directed towards their audiences in order to take action and establish social peace and harmony.'

And:

'When first reading the motto I instantly found the meaning to have a deep moral in relation to action as Da Vinci seems to be saying that, in order for our actions to have a meaning, things come from a deep rooted motive and belief first. Da Vinci would have to be inspired before creating a new piece of work as a purpose is needed in order to fully justify your own decisions. When choosing a practitioner to headline the festival I will try to see if the live performance of the repertoire demonstrates the importance of having a motive before you take action as only then our choices can be fully realised in truth.'

Again this series, there was a significant number of learners who developed a strong interpretation and argument in relation to the motto but failed to relate it to specific moments of repertoire, instead only discussing narrative which was not helpful:

'Brecht fits the scenario as throughout his life he tried to prompt a motive with every action he did due to the Nazis and the amount of poverty that war caused. I think Brecht is more suitable for this statement as the views he had at the time could have got him killed and because he still expressed his views publicly, shows that he fits the statement. Brecht throughout his life tried to prompt action against the Nazis, war, poverty etc, mainly through his productions as he would try and make his audience think about the problem that is being portrayed on stage, for example, Mother Courage is about the 30 Year War and because of the war, Mother Courage lost all of her children and she lives off the war with her canteen waggon but as Brecht said 'big profits are not made by little people,' which he portrays through Mother Courage as she is trying to get rich off the war but it doesn't work and she loses all her children.'

And:

'Miranda's most popular show Hamilton features many examples that represent what the motto is trying to say about action and taking control of your own destiny. One example of this is in the song 'Stay Alive' where John Lauren's decides to dual General Charles Lee, shooting him in the chest and taking him out of the fight against the English. The motive behind this is simple, Lee speaks out against George Washington, the man in charge, therefore Lauren's decides to protect the honour of Washington by challengingly personally. The individual action leads to a negative outcome, Lee is injured and Hamilton who encourages Laurens to not throw away his shot and injure Lee, is sent home as a result. Despite providing a good example of what the motto is trying to say about motives and actions, I would not endorse this song as an appropriate example for the festival as it only provides a negative outcome with a fight against the British getting desperate and difficult without Hamilton there to help.'

There was, again, an increase this series of responses where learners compared biographical or contextual aspects of their practitioners in light of the motto and not the performance and production repertoire. Learners' approach in these cases appeared to to use the research that had not been

used for Activity 1 within this activity, none of which is relevant to the actual task and is self-limiting:

'Bourne supports the quote by bringing together different sexualities. A couple of years before Swan Lake first premiered Britain introduced its first female prime minister. Everyone thought she was going to make many positive changes but that dies down when she introduced the law Section 28 in 1988. This banned the 'promotion' of homosexuality and same sex marriage, people were deeply upset …'

Some learners wrote a fairly brief response to this activity, possibly because having spent too long on the other two activities, leaving less time to respond to Activity 3. This was self-limiting.

However, the majority of learners gave clear, coherent and independent judgements in response to the motto, and it was clear that these learners had completed a thorough investigation process, which supported them when answering this activity:

'The most relevant piece directly symbolising the quote of the festival would be Sondheim's Into the Woods, within the final scenes of the piece the witch delivers the song Last Midnight, representing the consequences of the characters' actions seen throughout the play. Within this song the witch is stood centre stage on a raised platform with the characters dispersed around her on their knees. Sondheim uses different levels in this scene to highlight a power difference and belittle the other characters, the witch's motives are highlighted by her staging and placement in the space. She then proceeds to throw the magic beans out on the ground in the surrounding space which cues a high pitched sound representing the magic of the beans. The action takes place during the line 'If you want a bean, have another bean, beans were made for making you rich,' delivered with a sarcastic tone… Sondheim is addressing the value of the beans in the scene and the values of morality… Sondheim forces his characters to face their own consequences and the weight of their actions in the woods act as a lesson for its audience, he displays how the actions of the characters directly lead to their fate. The witch herself symbolises that every action needs to be prompted by a motive …'

And:

'Fran enters from stage left showing a physical distance between her and Pip, highlighting the emotional distance between them both. It is a clear representation of how actions speak louder than words as Fran didn't go over to comfort Pip but instead questioned her and mocked her for sitting outside in the cold. It suggests how Fran has no sympathy for Pip and that it is one of Pip's motives for wanting to break free from her mother… Fran continues to stand at a higher level than Pip suggesting levels of power and control above her as she is treating her like a child. She is glaring down and

pointing at Pip in an accusatory manner belittling her, as if she was still little. This action presents how Pip is prompted to take action and break free from her controlling mother due to Fran pushing her away by showing no sympathy but instead belittling her… Fran is causing Pip to relate to her childhood trauma of Fran shouting and controlling her, causing her to now realise she must break free from her mother's actions… Fran continues to show no respect for her daughter as she emphasise is the words 'I am not happy' mimicking Pip and suggesting how she is further talking to Pip as if she has no idea what is going on and is a child, despite the fact she is now an adult… Fran delivers the lines with no compassion but instead in a harsh and brutal way highlighting she has no maternal instinct. As Pip attempts to take action and walk away Fran responds with 'don't walk away from this.' … Pip is finally taking action to gain power from her mother. This reflects the motto because we see Pip feeling the need to finally change her unhappy life due to her mother motivating her by driving her away'.

And:

'A moment which reflects the motto would be when the Samsa family attempt to take action to regain their lives back when Gregor breaks loose from his bedroom. The family attempt to come to terms with Gregor's actions and situation, however Mr Samsa has no struggle to detach himself from his son… The family feel the need to take action and gain their lives back after first attempting to try living with Gregor's condition. The moment begins with Mrs Samsa and Greta presenting their motivation to take action when miming the movement of boxes from Gregor's room to downstage. The movement of the boxes is mechanical and systematic highlighting how the family have had so much motivation to take action and they have no sympathy for Gregor anymore and have lost all love for him. Gregor sees this as an opportunity and attempts to take action to escape due to his motivation of not wanting to be trapped in a room for any longer. He jumps from 2 bars to the floor next to his family in an animalistic manner. His elbows are bent with his arms barricading his head with his legs stretched, highlighting the idea of a distressed bug. Gregor scurries around trying to hide from his family and begins to hide under imaginary furniture. He is seen taken action in a hunched bug like position with his family surrounding him. Mr Samsa picks up an apple. He throws the apple at Gregor while the characters go into slow motion… The apple is thrown multiple times and the second time Mr Samsa replies with 'it's sunk in' which is followed by silence. Gregor's body slowly falls to the floor representing the pain his father's action has put him in, highlighting how much his father's motivation grew to take the action to regain his life back and not have to keep a secret any longer. Gregor lands on the floor with his arms in the air and legs on his chest… All expressions from the family are heightened, this action from the family presents the idea of the motto as the family had to be prompted by the motive of wanting their lives back before they could take action to attack the son and lose all love for him'.

And:

'In the song Pretty Women the Judge is sat in the barber's chair centre stage with a slumped, relaxed posture and eyes closed... In contrast, Sweeney Todd is stood up over the judge slowly travelling around him throughout the scene. Sweeney leans close behind the Judge leaving minimal room and holds a fixated glance with wide eyes. The tension of this moment is built up intentionally awaiting the climax of the scene, which we know eventually disperses and fails to take place... Sweeney's motives consume him, depicted through his hyper fixated facial expressions... This example is fitting for the festival as it has an extreme focus on consequences and how motives can have an impact and consume a character and cloud judgement.'

And:

'In Hamilton it is clear that Miranda's aim is to take action in many ways, he wants to show what America looked like in the past by telling the story of America then and America now showing how America has moved forward to bring equality among the people and allow everyone to be treated equally for who they are... A particular piece of repertoire where this is relevant is in the song Satisfied, this is sung by Angelica as both she and the rest of the ensemble congratulate the newlywed couple... Angelica feels a sense of responsibility to give a toast to the groom and the bride. She takes action by leading the cast in raising a glass and a motive for this is prompted by the fact she wants to make Eliza feel happy that she has found a man she wants to spend the rest of her life with... As they stand raising a glass all the ensemble are standing around further upstage in couples and small groups as they toast in unison to the married couple... Then, everyone stops and the central stage revolve begins to turn anticlockwise. As it rewinds there are strobes of light that are broken up which allow the audience to see little elements of what is happening on stage and how the rest of the ensemble are using robotic movements to symbolise moving back in time... As they turn anticlockwise the spotlight remains on Angelica as she stands in the centre watching the action around her as she travels mentally back in time to reveal how she met Hamilton in her past... As the stage stops turning Angelica stands and watches the action around her and her motive for this would be to understand what point she's at so she can tell her story... This links to the motto because Angelica wants to take action to express her feelings and her motive behind how she first met Hamilton and fell in love with him, it also links to Miranda's intentions as he believes he has a sense of responsibility to be honest that there needs to be more equality within America to bring about change...'

And:

'The moment begins with the actress standing centre stage left with her feet shoulder width apart whilst her stance is neutral, this equates to the focal point being her arms and hands, in which she is performing a flowing sequence of conversational gestures as

if talking with the audience rather than at them, which correlates to what she is speaking about… Her neutral upper body presentation mirrors her neutral costume. A beige zip up hoodie and the same coloured trousers are difficult to distinguish against the coordinating backdrop, a beige warm toned wall… As she travels to the back of the stage, with a timid and slow walk, her hands raised her face as she zips up the hoodie and softly declares the line 'We went into hiding.' This simple non-functional gesture and subtle backwards movement compliments her verbatim monologue to the point where the audience isn't distracted by the movement and can maintain focus on the social spoken aspect. The actress maintains a natural register and consistent tone throughout the scene, the lack of emotive gesture and intonations and inflexions within her voice allow the verbatim story to appear even more disturbing. Newson's intention here is to shock the audience, the lack of emotion paired with the described distressing circumstances creates the effect that these situations are normalised and common… By performing a disturbing account of a real person with the aspect that it is normalised Newson has informed his audience of the social injustices within the world around them and hopes with this knowledge they too will take action when it comes to injustices.'

And:

'Khan's approach to his choreography and production does fit the brief more as he relies on juxtaposition, chance and improvisation when creating a piece, allowing there to be more of an action/reaction feel to his work and this is evident in Xero Degrees as he and Cherkaoui perform a duet based on dual identities and perform movements that juxtapose each other. Khan's hand in the fight is more fluid and represents the hand gestures seen in katak, whereas Cherkaoui's hands are more flexed and stern to create a sense of battle between the two. Again this relates back to Khan's use of interpretation rather than a clear narrative, as to understand the motive behind the piece you have to understand the dancer's dual identities and struggle to come to terms with their culture. This shows Khan's work fits the statement as it clearly shows action and motive through his dual cultures and meeting of cultures in the piece. Bruce, on the other hand, approaches his choreography alone and focuses on more classic styles followed with an empty background to present the theme of the dance more openly and to project the stimuli. This is shown in his work Swan Song as the stage is completely black, allowing the lighting and the dancers movements to be at the forefront of the dance. Here, the light illuminates on stage two guards and one prisoner, showing the actions of the guards towards the prisoner, and the pain inflicted on him, to become more apparent in the piece as the black background is symbolic of the prisoner's mind by the end of the piece. This shows Bruce is applicable to the statement as he allows the audience to clarify the action in the piece by the blank backdrop. This allows the prisoner's extended balletic movement to be projected onto the audience showing how he longs to be free from captivity, and this would have been muted if Bruce had used a background. This is why he is also applicable to the statement'.

The majority of learners gave a clear and well supported recommendation for the festival summing up their conclusions in relation to the motto:

'Zero Degrees seems to have a motive within it but not necessarily have an outcome as the piece may have left people with mixed feelings. However Enter Achilles portrays a clear message that there needs to be change, femininity is not just for females, and that we do not have to abide by rules that should not even exist. I would therefore recommend Lloyd Newson's Enter Achilles to headline the festival.'

And:

'Both DV8 and Sondheim showcase action through motive throughout their repertoire. Newson is clear but much of his work is driven by a need that is artistically motivated rather than commercially or administratively driven therefore DV8s work takes action against artistic boundaries and would be ideal for performing arts festival. Similarly Sondheim pushes the boundaries of his work driven by a range of factors as he comments on democracy. His own personal motives are highlighted through his opinion that 'Yes I agree that political opposites have always existed in America.' Therefore both practitioners are driven by personal actions and opinions which then drive the motives in their work.'

Summary

Based on the performance seen during this series the following should be considered:

In preparation for the assessment

- Learners should be supported to achieve in this external assessment by developing their ability to critically analyse the performance and production repertoire of at least two chosen practitioners. Learners should be encouraged to watch, discuss and analyse the practitioners' performance and production work.

- Centres should guide learners to discuss the contextual factors, listed in the unit specification, which have influenced the performance and production repertoire being analysed by learners.

- If this work is completed during the 'teaching and learning' period before the Part A pre-release task is available, then once the Part A task is published, learners should have a wealth of knowledge and understanding of practitioners' performance and production repertoire and the cultural influences on this work.

- In preparation for this assessment learners should be encouraged to formulate their own opinions and make their own judgments on the performance and production repertoire work of their chosen practitioners. Developing this approach in preparation for the assessment will support learners to communicate independent judgments in response to each activity on the Part B task paper.

- The bibliography should be completed during the teaching and learning period and refined during the research period. This will allow learners to be selective in the use of relevant sources if they choose to reference or cite a source in their response.

- A wide variety of resources should be used when conducting research.

Learner responses

- Learners should provide an individual response to each activity headed with the relevant activity number.

- Learners need to respond to the specific focus of each activity.

- All activities require discussion and/or analysis of practitioners' performance and production repertoire in relation to the theme.

- The discussion and analysis of the performance and production repertoire should be practical in detail and relevant to the theme. Simple plot narratives are highly unlikely to support learners to achieve very highly.

- As in previous years, learners should be careful to ensure that, if they are using practitioners with specific acting or rehearsal techniques, for example in the case of Stanislavski or Brecht, that the response does not focus on this aspect of the practitioner's work. No activity requires learners to analyse the theories or techniques of practitioners; rather they should analyse their practitioners' own performance and production repertoire, or work which accurately reflects the practitioner's own work.

- In their response to Activities 1 and 3, learners should be encouraged to give equal consideration to two appropriately chosen practitioners.

- Learners need to see live production and/or recordings of live productions that fully reflect the working practices of their chosen practitioners.

Administration

- Centres are reminded that they must complete the essential documents relating to each learner and the centre itself (the Learner Record and

Authentication Sheet and the Centre Register). The examiner requires these for marking. It is **essential** that this paperwork is printed out and provided as a hard copy which the examiner can write on, and not sent digitally.

- Ensure learners are responding to the correct task paper for the series. There are two opportunities for learners to be externally assessed in this unit each year and each series will have a different theme and a different specific focus for each activity. Learners **must** respond to the set task for the relevant series in which they are being assessed.

- Ensure learners respond to each activity separately and if they are not using the published Part B response template for Unit 1, which has clear headings for each of the three activities, then ensure learners write Activity 1, Activity 2 and Activity 3 at the start of their response to each activity.

- Learners should list the performance and production elements they are responding to within Activity 2.

- Each learner's work needs to be clearly identifiable, and each page of their response should have the centre name and number and the learner's name and registration number on it.

- Each learner's response to each activity, their bibliography and accompanying mark sheet should be kept together, ideally by stapling it together.

- If a learner is absent or does not complete all the tasks this should be noted on the centre register so it is clear that the work was not completed as opposed to missing.

Ofqual
Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government
CEA Rewarding Learning

Pearson Education Limited. Registered company number 872828
with its registered office at 80 Strand, London, WC2R 0RL, United Kingdom